

**ST. LAWRENCE PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 27, 2010**

The meeting of the St. Lawrence Planning Commission was on held on Wednesday, January 27, 2010, in the Council Chambers of St. Lawrence Borough Hall, 3540 St. Lawrence Avenue, Reading, PA 19606.

ATTENDANCE: Mr. Warren Lubenow, Vice Chairman
Mr. Barry Bixler, Member
Mr. Thomas Beil, Member
Mr. James Simmons, Member

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Mr. C. Bruce Heilman, Systems Design Engineering, Inc
Ms. Pamela Stevens, Systems Design Engineering, Inc
Ms. Allison Leinbach, Borough Manager
Mrs. Susan Eggert, Commission Secretary
Mr. David Lechner, Architect
Mr. David Roth, Contractor
Mr. Gregg Hafer
Mrs. Lynn Hafer
Ms. Carole Duran, Reading Eagle

ABSENT: Mr. James Lewars, Chairman

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting of the St. Lawrence Borough Planning Commission was called to order by Vice Chairman, Warren Lubenow, at 7:30 PM. The meeting began with the pledge of allegiance.

REORGANIZATION: The Commission reorganizes on an annual basis. Mr. Lubenow nominated Mr. Lewars to continue as the Commission's chairman; seconded by Mr. Simmons; all were in favor and the motion carried. Mr. Beil nominated Mr. Lubenow to continue as the vice chair; seconded by Mr. Simmons; all were in favor and the motion carried. Mr. Beil nominated Mrs. Eggert to continue as the Commission Secretary; seconded by Mr. Simmons; all were in favor and the motion carried.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES: The Commission has not had a meeting since October. The Commission members took a few minutes to read over the minutes from the October meeting. **MOTION:** Mr. Simmons made a motion to accept the minutes of the October 2009 meeting as presented; seconded by Mr. Beil; all were in favor and the motion carried.

INTRODUCTIONS: Since there were quite a few people in the audience as well as a new engineering firm Mr. Lubenow felt that introductions were in order.

2010 MEETING SCHEDULE: The 2010 meeting schedule was distributed to the members of the Commission for review. The Commission will meet on the 4th Wednesday of the month with the exception of November and December because of the holidays, those months they will meet on the 3rd Wednesday of the month as long as there is business. The Commission members reviewed the schedule. **MOTION:** Mr. Simmons made a motion to have Mrs. Eggert advertise the meeting schedule as presented; seconded by Mr. Bixler; all were in favor and the motion carried.

2009 ANNUAL REPORT - The annual report was prepared by Mrs. Eggert and distributed to the members of the Commission for review. This report must be presented to Council on an annual basis for approval. The report consists of the activities of the Commission throughout the year. There was one correction to the report; under DiBiase Variance Application eliminate the last two lines since that information never went before the Commission because there was no meeting. **MOTION:** Mr. Beil made a motion to approve the report as presented with the correction as noted above; seconded by Mr. Simmons; all were in favor and the motion carried.

INFORMAL PRESENTATIONS

GREGG HAFER - Mr. Hafer introduced himself to the Planning Commission and indicated that he is coming before the Commission to get their input on a project. Mr. Hafer is interested in the property at 3131 St. Lawrence Avenue which is the old Wachovia Bank building. Mr. Hafer would like to turn that location into a car wash however that site is zoned residential. Ms. Leinbach indicated that she felt that when zoning changes were made that that property as well as the property across the street were actually missed which was on the list of items to address with addendums to the current zoning ordinance. These locations do neighbor a residential district however are definitely not residential building. Ms. Leinbach also indicated that C10 districts allow for car washes by special condition and Ms. Stevens indicated that C5 allows for them by right. Ms. Leinbach indicated that she felt that C5 was a commercial highway district and would actually rather see the location changed to C10 and allow car washes by right. Mr. Hafer explained to the Commission his plans for the building as far as the entrance, flow of traffic, hours of operation and how the business would actually operate. The Commission was very open to the idea and Mr. Hafer will do more research and report back to the Commission when he has a plan.

DAVID KLECHNER - Mr. Klechner presented to the Commission to get their opinion on a project that he is interested in pursuing at 3400 St. Lawrence Avenue which is the old Borough Hall. Mr. Klechner indicated that he has been working with PennDOT to work out some issues with regard to the upper lot and parking issues with regard to the property. Mr. Klechner indicated that he knows he will need to get some waivers from the Borough. A plan for 8 parking spaces across the top was presented to the Commission for review. The spaces as configured allows enough room for vehicles to make a turn to be able to pull out onto St. Lawrence, no backing out onto the state highway would be allowed. Some additional paving and moving of sidewalk will also be required. Mr. Klechner is looking at converting the property into 4 or 5 condo type units. Mr. Klechner indicated that if he were to go with 5 units he would need to provide parking along the side of the property using the entrance off of Oley Turnpike Road. There are numerous slope issues related to this concept and would require waivers. Mr. Klechner was looking for some support from the Commission with regard to his plans as well as his parking plan for the property before investing anymore time and money into the project.

Mr. Lubenow indicated that he felt that this was a reasonable use for the property and would fit in with what already exists in the general area. The Commission also recognized that no matter what use would go into that property there will be parking and slope issues and they would be willing to work with prospective buyers on those issues. The Commission felt that the use that Mr. Klechner was proposing would work well for the site. Mr. Klechner has also been working with Traffic Planning & Design, the Borough's traffic engineers as well as PennDOT on the traffic plan. Mr. Klechner will keep the Commission updated on his progress with the proposed project.

EXETER TOWNSHIP ZONING ORDINANCE/SALDO – Information was received from Exeter Township with regard to the changes that they are proposing to their zoning ordinance and SALDO. This was made available for anyone on the Commission to review. Mr. Heilman indicated that typically it should be reviewed for any zoning district changes to assure that there are no conflicts since it is a neighboring municipality. It was noted that the tree requirements are being pulled from the zoning ordinance and placed into the SALDO. There are no map changes.

ZONING HEARING BOARD - Ms. Leinbach indicated that the decision on the DiBiase zoning hearing is being appealed by the Borough and counter appealed by Mr. DiBiase.

COMMERCIAL ZONING PERMIT APPLICATION - Ms. Leinbach indicated that the Borough has received a commercial zoning permit application for 3001 Perkiomen Avenue. It appears that they wish to add uses and therefore will need to come before the Planning Commission with official plans. Ms. Leinbach indicated that the zoning permit application will be denied.

GOODWILL UPDATE - It appears that Goodwill is still waiting for PennDOT approval. At this time they were not ready to come before Planning Commission but most likely will be coming before the Commission in February. They are going to need to do modifications to the driveway and will compile a list of requested waivers to present at that time. Ms. Leinbach indicated that Van Cleef Engineering will be finishing out the Goodwill project.

ADJOURNMENT: Mr. Beil made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Mr. Bixler; all were in favor and the motion carried. The meeting of the St. Lawrence Planning Commission adjourned at 8:45 PM.

Respectively submitted,

Susan D. Eggert
Commission Secretary